



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 312

February Session, 2014

Substitute House Bill No. 5561

House of Representatives, April 2, 2014

The Committee on Education reported through REP. FLEISCHMANN of the 18th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING STATE AND LOCAL CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY AND PARTICIPATION IN COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-66kk of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2014*):

3 (a) The governing council of each state and local charter school shall
4 post on any Internet web site that the council operates the (1) schedule,
5 (2) agenda, and (3) minutes of each meeting, including any meeting of
6 subcommittees of the governing council.

7 (b) The membership of the governing council of each state and local
8 charter school shall meet the requirements concerning such
9 membership set forth in the provisions of subdivision (3) of subsection
10 (d) of section 10-66bb at the time of application for a state or local
11 charter and at all other times.

12 Sec. 2. Section 10-66ll of the general statutes is repealed and the
13 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2014*):

14 Annually, the commissioner shall randomly select one state or local
15 charter school, as defined in subdivision (3) of section 10-66aa, to be
16 subject to a comprehensive financial audit conducted by an auditor
17 selected by the Commissioner of Education. Except as provided for in
18 subsection (d) of section 10-66ee, the state or local charter school shall
19 be responsible for all costs associated with the audit conducted
20 pursuant to the provisions of this section.

21 Sec. 3. Subsection (m) of section 10-66ee of the 2014 supplement to
22 the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
23 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2014*):

24 (m) [Charter] State and local charter schools may, to the same extent
25 as local and regional boards of education, enter into cooperative
26 arrangements as described in section 10-158a, provided such
27 arrangements are approved by the Commissioner of Education. Any
28 state or local charter school participating in a cooperative arrangement
29 under this subsection shall maintain its status as a state or local charter
30 school and not be excused from any obligations pursuant to sections
31 10-66aa to 10-66ll, inclusive, as amended by this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2014</i>	10-66kk
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2014</i>	10-66ll
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2014</i>	10-66ee(m)

ED Joint Favorable Subst.

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill, which includes local charter schools in the provisions regarding state charter school transparency, accountability, and cooperative arrangements, is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact, as local charter schools are operated by local and regional school districts, who currently adhere to these provisions.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5561*****AN ACT CONCERNING STATE AND LOCAL CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY AND PARTICIPATION IN COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill applies three laws to local charter schools that currently apply only to state charter schools. It:

1. requires local charter schools to post meeting minutes and agendas on their websites,
2. allows the education commissioner to randomly pick a local charter school for a financial audit, and
3. allows local charter schools to enter into cooperative arrangements.

A state charter school is authorized by the State Board of Education (SBE) and is not part of a local public school district. A local charter school is authorized by a local or regional board of education and is part of its local district. Local charters must also receive SBE approval. There are currently no local charter schools open in Connecticut. The New Haven Board of Education has recently approved one to open this fall.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2014

LOCAL CHARTER SCHOOLS***Posting Meeting Information***

The bill requires the governing council of a local charter school to post on its website the (1) schedule, (2) agenda, and (3) minutes of each meeting, including any governing council subcommittee meeting. This

is currently required of state charters.

Audits

The bill requires the education commissioner to select a state or local charter school at random for a comprehensive audit conducted by an auditor he selects. The charter school will be responsible for any cost related to the audit. Under current law, he can select only a state charter school.

Cooperative Agreements

The bill specifies that state and local charter schools can enter into cooperative arrangements with local and regional boards of education or other charter schools as long as the education commissioner approves. Current law states that entering into a cooperative arrangement does not change the status of a state charter or change its responsibilities under state law. The bill specifically extends this provision to local charters.

Under the cooperative arrangement law, two or more boards of education can agree in writing to cooperatively provide school programs or services, special education services, or health services.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 33 Nay 0 (03/19/2014)